



## State of Utah

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#### NEWS RELEASE

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#### FOURTH GRADERS GET REMINDER - "STAY OUT AND STAY ALIVE!"

The lure of an abandoned mine is the promise of innocent adventure. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, death or injury lurks in every dark corner. That's the message being sent today to Utah's fourth graders.

The Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining's Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program has mailed more than 17,000 workbooks to more than 260 elementary schools to help educate youngsters to the dangers of abandoned mines. *Utah's Mining Heritage* also teaches how our lives depend on mining, Utah mining history, and how mined lands are reclaimed.

"Our program closes hundreds of dangerous abandoned mines each year but there are an estimated 20,000 abandoned mines in Utah," said Mark Mesch, administrator of the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program. "Educating people about the dangers posed by abandoned mines is essential if we are to prevent a tragedy."

Since 1985 five people have died in abandoned mines in Utah and there have been more than two-dozen incidents involving injuries or people becoming lost in mines. An adventurer may run into poisonous air or a lack of oxygen and be overcome without warning. Timbers used to shore up shafts are often old and rotting and may give way at the slightest touch, or vertical shafts hundreds of feet deep may be hidden in dark shadows or under unstable and rotting flooring. The dangers are numerous and the only sure way to avoid trouble is to follow the motto, "Stay Out and Stay Alive!"

The workbook may be used by scouts and other youth groups and is available by contacting the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, 1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210, P.O. Box 145801, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84114, or telephone (801) 538-5340. Information is also available at the division's website at [www.ogm.utah.gov](http://www.ogm.utah.gov).

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